



MAP PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2005

Dear MAP partners,

In this first MAP Newsletter of 2005, we take pleasure in informing you about some of the developments that have taken place after the conference in The Hague of 1-3 June 2005, and we look ahead at the activities which are yet to come.

The conference, a joint initiative of the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) and the Union of Local Authorities in Israel (ULAI), has resulted in the establishment of a Municipal Alliance for Peace (MAP), a cooperation framework to promote, facilitate and implement local initiatives between Palestinian, Israeli and international municipalities to promote peace and mutual understanding. All participants to the conference unanimously expressed their strong commitment to undertake practical follow up actions and start trilateral cooperation projects soonest.

As a municipal-based organisation, MAP will operate in a decentralised manner, with a central role for the Palestinian, Israeli and international municipal partnerships and their action plans. Therefore, the initiatives at local level, initiated by the participating municipalities and their citizens, are at the heart of MAP. Through the alliance network, partnerships can get access to funds, share their experience, jointly address problems that stand in the way for local initiatives, and collectively lobby towards national leaders.

Before the first trilateral partnerships can actually start with the implementation of their projects under the umbrella of MAP, it is necessary to create a solid and institutionalised working basis for MAP and to mobilize the donor community to invest in MAP. We plan to do that step by step. In this newsletter, we would like to inform you about the steps that we foresee to take in the near future.

Follow up meeting MAP in Jerusalem

On August 3rd 2005, a follow up meeting between APLA, ULAI, UNDP and VNG took place in Jerusalem at the UNDP offices to discuss the steps to be taken in order to secure immediate practical follow up of the conference, and to secure support for the start-up phase of MAP. Both APLA and ULAI were very encouraged by the support that was offered by UNDP. In brief, UNDP is supporting the following activities:

- Technical assistance is provided to help MAP "market" the initiative and the projects. Documents are drafted to address the donor community, including a strategy and action plan of MAP, a trust fund model etc.
- Two MAP coordinators are currently being recruited, one for APLA and one for ULAI;
- After the meeting of the international board of MAP that will take place on 19 September 2005, a donor meeting will be arranged in Jerusalem to promote the initiative and mobilize financial resources.

Start up phase of MAP

International Board of MAP

The international board of MAP initially has the core-function to provide overall strategic guidance for MAP, to determine priorities and opportunities for MAP, and to ensure political and international lobby. During the conference, the first International Board of MAP was elected. The chairman of VNG was asked (and agreed) to act as MAP's first chairman. In addition, representatives from the following organisations and municipalities were elected:

- APLA (2 representatives);
- ULAI (2 representatives);
- UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments);
- FCM (the Federation of Canadian Municipalities);
- Hamar municipality (Norway);
- The European Network of Local Authorities for Peace in the Middle East (2 representatives);
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme).

The international board of MAP will meet on September 19th in Strasbourg, France. During that meeting, the international board will discuss and agree upon the strategy documents that are drafted to address the donor community.

A joint international secretariat

To assist the MAP partners in getting their municipal activities off the ground, a joint MAP secretariat will be established. A gradual build-up of the secretariat is foreseen, along with the increasing number of MAP activities at municipal level. For the initial period, two MAP liaison officers will be assigned, one to APLA and one to ULAI. The permanent office for the joint secretariat will be set up as quickly as possible in Jerusalem with full-time staff assigned.

Activity calendar 2005

The following activities are foreseen for 2005:

- Drafting of project documents – until 19 September;
- Recruiting two MAP coordinators - before 19 September;
- First meeting international board of MAP on 19 September, Strasbourg, France;
- Donor conference Jerusalem – fall 2005;
- Conference Cordoba organised by the Network of European Local Authorities for Peace in the Middle East, 22 – 24 November 2005;
- Start up of implementation of first pilot trilateral cooperation projects MAP – foreseen before the end of 2005.

Partnership MAP

Guiding principles for local actions

The guiding principles include a range of priority areas, in order to focus MAP's efforts. These priorities are debated by the political leadership of MAP, through its International Board, and will be guiding for the annual action plan of MAP, or the Local Action MAP. The initial list of priority areas that have been identified for the first start-up phase of MAP is restricted to the following four areas:

1. Youth & Culture
2. Environment
3. Economic development
4. Municipal management

Municipalities and their representative organisations from around the world are invited to contribute actively to the implementation of local action plans by the (trilateral) municipal partnerships. Within the overall framework of the Local Action MAP, its priorities and project outlines, municipal partnerships can submit requests for (supplementary) funding for their local action plan to the MAP secretariat.

Invitation to submit project proposals

Especially in the start-up phase we are in now, municipalities are invited to contact the MAP secretariat and present their partnership projects. The MAP Secretariat will transform good project outlines to project proposals to be presented to the donor community as pilot projects. Good trilateral project proposals will help MAP mobilize the donor community. Please note that the MAP secretariat can assist the international municipalities in finding Israeli and/or Palestinian partners in case trilateral partnerships are not yet established.

Further information

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